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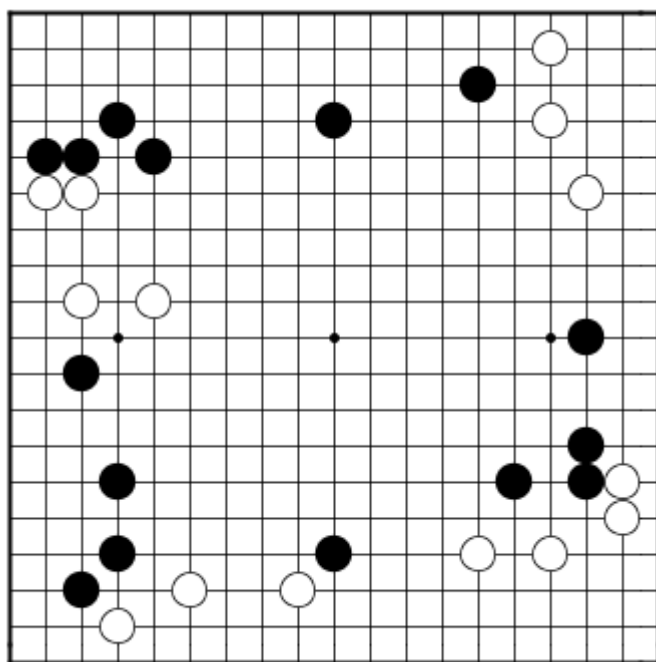
Professional, Unprofessional, and Fundamentals

by Sorin Gherman

White to play next.

The fuseki stage has just ended - this game is about to enter the middle game.

Think for yourself where you want to play next with white, and why. As usually, think for a few moves in advance, not just the following move.

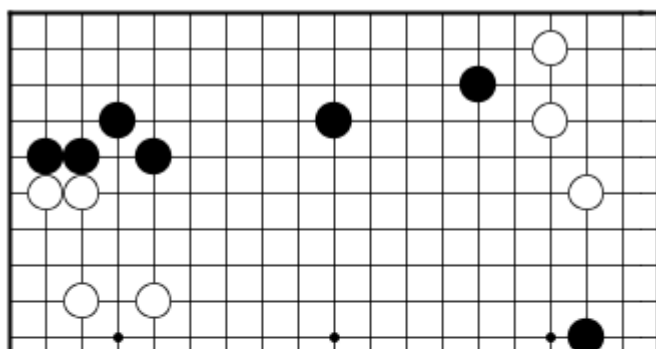


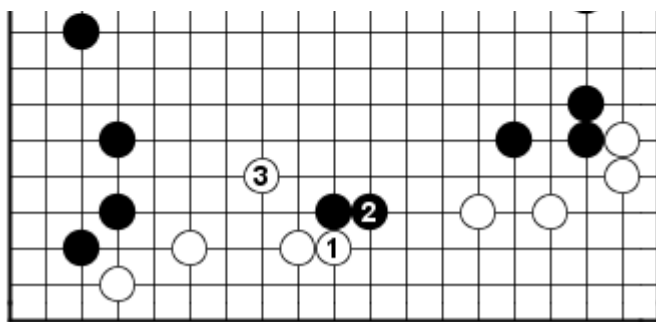
Dia 1

First of all, the hot area is on the middle of the lower side. If you missed that area and considered playing somewhere else, think about this really hard: the black stone on the middle of the lower side and the white stone close to it, on the 3rd line, are almost touching each other: from White's perspective, letting black play in contact, on the 3rd line, is unbearable: his group in the lower left would be isolated and weak, and the lower right corner stars to look vulnerable to an invasion or deep reduction.

I could also argue based on the order of moves (Black's move on the middle of the lower side was played last) but while that is easy, it is also pointless: the sequence of moves that led to the current position doesn't really matter when we are to choose the next move.

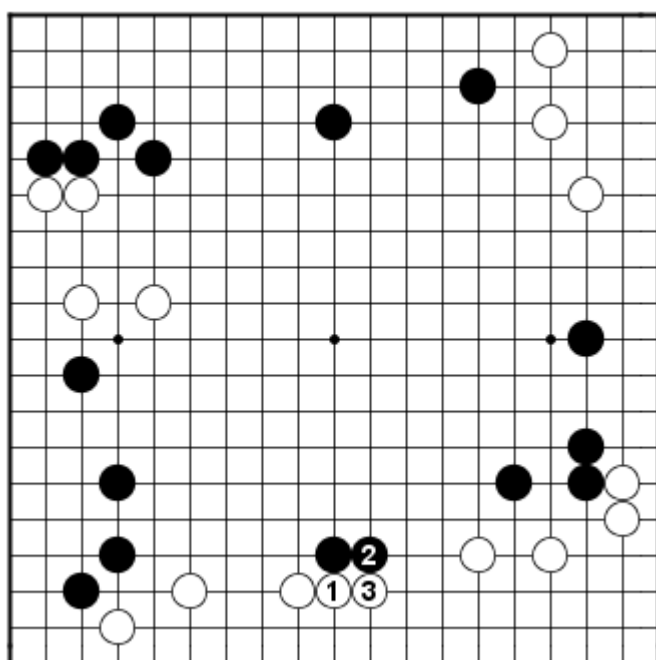
The sequence showed in Dia 2 is one standard approach... and I played this mechanically in the game. In this case it is really bad: White's move at 3 has no impact on black whatsoever on the left hand side, since black is very thick there.





Dia 2

What white should actually do was to simply crawl on the third line, making territory in the process. This thought didn't occur to me at all during the game: it looks so "unprofessional" to just crawl, right? Actually it's just the natural thing to do: white connects his positions on the lower side and makes territory, while black builds some thickness into the center which is of little value in this game. Black's pressing move on the middle of the lower side was questionable to start with, it's way too easy on white. Only if white knew [the fundamentals](#) and played the most natural moves...



Dia 3

Conclusion

- Judge each position from scratch: don't just apply blind patterns.
- Forget about "unprofessional" moves: just play what makes sense in each position. That's what professionals do best.
- Don't fall prey to your own bad habits: "reflex moves" have to pass the thinking test before actually being played.

Further study

- [Lessons in the Fundamentals of Go](#) by Toshiro Kageyama